

7-1-2007

Law, Buddhism, and Social Change: A Conversation with the 14th Dalai Lama September 20-21, 2006

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Recommended Citation

Buffalo Law Review, *Law, Buddhism, and Social Change: A Conversation with the 14th Dalai Lama September 20-21, 2006*, 55 Buff. L. Rev. 719 (2007).

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.law.buffalo.edu/buffalolawreview/vol55/iss2/18>

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APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPT†

Law, Buddhism, and Social Change: A Conversation with the Dalai Lama September 20-21, 2006

Participants:¹

TIMOTHY BROOK
GEORGE DREYFUS
KENNETH EHRENBERG
DAVID ENGEL
REBECCA FRENCH
LESLIE GUNAWARDANA
GEORGE HEZEL
HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA
JAMES MAGAVERN
ELIZABETH MENSCH
FERNANDA PIRIE
FRANK REYNOLDS
LOBSANG SHASTRI
KENNETH SHOCKLEY
WINNIFRED SULLIVAN
VESNA WALLACE
RICHARD WHITECROSS

INTRODUCTIONS: Dean Nils Olsen welcomes the Dalai Lama and then Lynn Mather of the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy greets him. Rebecca French introduces him to the participants one by one. His Holiness

† Transcribed by Kunchok Youdon, copyedited by Rebecca French and Joe Schneider.

1. For a full review of the background of the participants, see *An Introduction to the Conference with the Dalai Lama on Law, Buddhism, and Social Change*, *supra* at 640-42.

the Dalai Lama shakes hands with each of them.

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REBECCA FRENCH: We want to talk today about the relationship between Buddhists and law and political problems. You've said that you identify yourself first as a human being, second as a Tibetan, and third as a Buddhist. We want to ask you about the conflicts and tensions between those three in terms of politics and laws.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: No conflict! (he laughs and so does the audience) On a human level, there is a foundation of basic human good qualities that are universal, that everybody has, east or west or south or north. I think on that level, the values and the appreciation for these values are also the same. For example, a Tibetan community may also be a Buddhist community, which would make it a special environment. So under those circumstances, it would have its own certain features and special characteristics, but these would naturally be based on basic human values. So, because we all share these principles, there is no contradiction in identifying as a human being, a Tibetan, and then a Buddhist. Furthermore, as a Buddhist monk and a Tibetan, it is important to note that Buddhist ideas and Buddhist principles have pervaded the Tibetan community at least since Buddhism flourished in Tibet. Whether each individual Tibetan knew Buddhism or not, the whole atmosphere or way of life was pervaded by these ideas and principles.

GEORGE DREYFUS: Do you feel, for example, that as a Buddhist monk, it is proper for you to be a political leader? I think that's what the question is trying to ask.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: A political leader in what sense?

GEORGE DREYFUS: In the Tibetan context.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: You see, some lamas, from Ladakh, up to Mon and Arunchal, are very active politicians involved in party politics, but I disagree with that. Monks should disassociate themselves from party politics. The involvement with a national struggle is a different kind of politics. In the Tibetan case, national freedom is very much related to the preservation of Buddha Dharma as well as freedom and individual liberty. So, I consider my service in the Tibetan national freedom struggle to be part of my practice of Buddha Dharma; it is serving others by practicing and implementing compassion. But I will never touch party politics.

To illustrate how these two types of politics can overlap, I was once in Thailand, and the king hosted a lunch. The king asked me, as the Dalai Lama, a Buddhist monk and at the same time the head of the government, how I view the death sentence. The thirteenth Dalai Lama abolished the death sentence. For me, at least, this was no problem, and of course since I became a refugee, balancing these roles has become much less difficult. It is unfortunate that during the Fifth, Eighth, and Thirteenth Dalai Lamas, there was some questionable warfare. I do not know if it was a Dalai Lama ruling then, it could have been a Regent. I heard that after the Thirteenth Dalai Lama passed away, there were two Regents, one monk and one lay person, and then unfortunately there is one case of taking an eye from one of the Tibetan ministers. I think this was mainly due to personal hatred, and it was very unfortunate. That person, actually I think, was a very, very favorite lay official of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama who visited Europe, England and also Germany with the first batch of Tibetan students who went to England. So, when the decision was made according to their law, I don't know the two regents. One monk Reting Rinpoche later became my teacher. He refused, saying "I am a monk, I cannot sign that." He handed it back to the lay Regent. This is what I heard, it sounds good.

REBECCA FRENCH: So, Buddhist monks should not be involved in politics. One of the things that Leslie and I have been talking about for long time is the situation in Sri Lanka.

LESLIE GUNAWARDANA: First of all, let me say how privileged I feel and how happy I am to participate in this conversation with you. I was deeply impressed by the statement you made yesterday about the need to combine compassion with the judicial process. Combining compassion with the administration of justice has been a major problem in human history. Of course, significant progress has been made during the last two centuries, but if one were to look for the *basic* differences between justice administered a thousand years ago and today, in certain respects the difference does not appear to amount to much—we do not appear to have progressed very far in radically breaking away from “an eye for eye” or “tooth for tooth” type of situation. The stark contrast between the Buddhist ideals and the judicial system in its actual practice attracted the attention of Buddhists in Sri Lanka very early in its history. During the first three centuries of the Christian era two Sri Lankan rulers made attempts to develop a penal system that they sought to combine with compassion. It was described as a penal system based on *ahimsa*. It was a very attractive concept for the Buddhists but, at the same time, a very difficult concept to implement. It is rather interesting, yet disappointing, to note that the two rulers who tried to implement such a system were in fact deposed and lost their thrones. Even today, Buddhists have this enormous problem of developing a more humane and less violent penal system that does not impose penalties such as depriving offenders of their lives or causing any other physical injury. I would like to know how far you have progressed in Tibet in trying to implement principles of *ahimsa* through developing a penal system in accord with Buddhist ideals?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: In all human activities, whether or not the word compassion is explicitly mentioned as a part of the process, compassion seems to be taken for granted. Take the basic example of parents' care for their children. Nobody explicitly points out the role of compassion there, but it is taken for granted that it is part of that process. Naturally, whether it is mentioned or not, I think happiness both in the family and in society is based on compassion. This too people take for granted. Law exists for the protection of the people. Why do we protect people? Compassion. That's my view. I think the death sentence,

also cutting of limbs, should be prohibited. I am one of the signatories of the Amnesty International Movement to put an end to the death penalty. Also, as I mentioned earlier, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama abolished it. That was an act of compassion.

REBECCA FRENCH: So again, would you agree that monks should not be in politics?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: I think so.

REBECCA FRENCH: Do you think so, Leslie?

LESLIE GUNAWARDANA: It is very difficult to say.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: I know. Politics, what does that mean? In the late '40s or early '50s, when Kushu Bakula joined the Congress Party, the nature of his involvement seemed to have more to do with a kind of a national struggle—service to the Ladakhi people. I think that was appropriate. Then eventually, there were more Ladakhi politicians, which led to a political rivalry. Then I think, Bakula Rinpoche should resign. Because then he is no longer serving the Ladakh community but rather the interest of the individual politician. There is great damage when a lama joins one political party because some of his followers, even some members of his own monastery, may have a different view of that political party. This creates great difficulties and complications, and I feel, great damage to the image of Buddha dharma. Therefore, particularly in these areas, democracy appears not to be very mature. After each election even family members are sometimes divided. So under these circumstances, I suggest, monks—not only lama but all monks—should avoid party politics.

GEORGE DREYFUS: The question of the role of lamas in various parts, like Kham or Amdo, is a really important question. In Tibetan society in particular, lamas are still to a certain extent leaders. What do you think is the proper role of monks in politics and civil society?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: I think it is similar to Ladakh. In a very poorly educated community with no history of democratic practice or elections, the people rely more and more on the lama. So, I think a good lama really serves a community, and bad lama exploits it. In the future this will change, because public education will be improved. Administration, I think, is something different. But party politics I think should be handled by lay people.

FRANK REYNOLDS: Let's go back to your distinction between two kinds of politics, one national movement and the other, party politics. It is my understanding that you and those with whom you worked have actually developed constitutions that try to adjudicate this problem. They seem to be in the middle. In other words, have you played a role in the construction of the constitution that will regulate the political system? If you have, does that mean that you, a monk, have participated although you don't believe monks should participate? Also, I am more broadly interested in the constitution that has arisen and it's Tibetan character. Is the current constitution, or the constitutions that have been formed distinctly Tibetan or distinctly Buddhist?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: In the draft constitution for the future of Tibet, which we adopted in 1963, both, the principle of Buddha Dharma and also the principle of democracy are mentioned. The preamble of the constitution states that the text is based on the combination of Buddha Dharma and democratic principles. When the constitution was being drafted, at one point, I insisted that the Dalai Lama's power could be abolished by two-thirds of majority of the people's assembly. In 1962, we circulated the essence of the draft constitution; there I mentioned this clause on the power of the Dalai Lama. So in that early draft, there was a sentence that I insisted upon that said, based upon new reality and circumstances, the position and power of the Dalai Lama needs to be adapted and changed. But the people and communities outside, the refugee community, very much disagreed. They believed we should keep the Dalai Lama with absolute power. So, in the finalized draft of the constitution, I insisted this should be included. As to the rest of the points, I don't know. I am not an expert.

FRANK REYNOLDS: Could I ask if these experts really took seriously ancient pre-modern Tibetan law? In the western tradition, in American and British law, we have a long tradition of Christian ideas being taken into the legal system both explicitly and implicitly. I am just wondering if your experts really consulted ancient Tibetan texts—maybe read Rebecca's book—and tried in specific ways to make this a distinctively Tibetan constitution from this culture.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: In 1991, a new charter was drafted and adopted and is now being implemented in the refugee community. The previous constitution was more of an idea for the future of Tibet; the second one we are actually now implementing. Accordingly elections are now taking place. The members of the drafting committee could come here and give you more information, but I am ignorant. I am not clear whether they really consulted the texts.

Of course we are in entirely different circumstances here as a refugee community because it is not our country. Also in previous years, there was no idea of democracy in my generation. Around 1952, when we were still in Tibet, we started reforms, and set up a reform committee, and implemented some reforms. Also, the Thirteenth Dalai Lama wanted to extend the national assembly. Usually some officials and then abbots of bigger monasteries. Then during the Thirteenth Dalai Lama he try to expand the participation of different districts and local village leaders. So perhaps the concept of democratization was beginning to reflect in their minds during the Thirteenth Dalai Lama. So during my period around 1952, we already had some movement. Then in 1959, we began to implement reforms fully. But the Chinese found this a little uncomfortable because they wanted reforms according their own idea or pattern. They thought that if Tibetans carried out some reforms according to Tibetan conditions, they would fit and it would be a hindrance to their pattern of reform. Also around 1956 or late 1955, open revolt started, so everything became very complicated, very difficult. After 1959, we came to India and then around 1960 or 1961, we started genuine democratization, with, for example, the election of a parliament. So, now step by step, since six years ago, we

have an elected political leadership. Since then, my position is like semi-retirement.

KENNETH EHRENBERG: I would like to return to Leslie's question about penal law and its relationship to compassion. You said that the long term goal of punishment is compassion for the larger group in society. However, elsewhere, you have written that compassion means that we should not use the utility of the larger group to justify the imposition of pain and suffering on smaller numbers or individuals. How can we then use penal law as a way of implementing compassion in society if for the sake of the larger group we will impose sufferings on a smaller number?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: Theoretically speaking, violence is a method. Whether the use of this method can be justified or not depends entirely on the [individual actor's] motivation and research [into the circumstances]. This was true in the Buddha's own life; in a story about a previous life, he implemented violence in order to bring greater benefit to a greater number of people and to save their lives. The Buddha's teaching is that you must punish not out of feelings of revenge or hatred but out of compassion. In some cases, unless you provide a harsh treatment, that [criminal] will continue harmful activities which is actually harmful to himself or herself. Therefore, out of a sense of concern, [the judge] orders a [punishment] to stop [the criminal from] doing that kind of action. So, it looks similar but essentially there are big differences: one wrathful action is taken out of genuine compassion, one out of hatred. When the [punishment] is out of hatred and revenge, it is totally negative. So sometimes I asked some legal experts. What about a situation in which a single father or a single mother is the only caretaker of some young children. Then, that parent is convicted of a serious crime, worthy of the death penalty. According to the law, that person has done something very wrong, but if you carry out the death sentence, the children will have no one to care for them. Then, you need compassion.

RICHARD WHITECROSS: Your Holiness, your response raises the question of the character and education of the

individual judge. Is it your belief that judges should be trained in Buddhist philosophy and meditation in order to possess the necessary compassion?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: It is not necessary that the training be Buddhist. That is too narrow. As I mentioned earlier, it is on a human level. I think many of our errors in law, the economy, education, politics, in every field including religion involve working on a human level. I am always telling or expressing this to people. Politics is necessarily dirty. It's politics, it's activities relate to the society, to the community. But then I think that in some cases, in most cases politician are little strange. Eventually all politics becomes dirty politics. It is similarly in law.

Tibetan monastic debate education—the early part of the training—deals with learning how to think critically, the children are taught how to think critically. And part of this training is logic. There is a saying that the criteria of the mastery of this early stage of debating is: if you can prove that something that is the case, is not the case, or if something that is not the case, you can show through argument is the case. Then you have mastered the skill. Some lawyers try to prove that a person who did a crime, did not do the crime, or they try to prove that someone innocent is a criminal. When such things happen, it is dirty law. Exploitation in the economy through lying, that is also dirty. Using religion in the wrong way creates dirty religion. Everything depends on the society as a whole. Whether any human action or activity will have a positive and constructive effect or not, depends on the actor's motivation. It is not necessary that the motivation comes from one particular religion. I prefer not to touch religion. We learn basic human qualities such as affection and the value of compassion from our birth and not through religion. Now modern scientists are finding that more compassionate thought brings more calm in our brain. As a result, brain function becomes smoother. Also, [they have found that] negative emotions actually eat at our immune system, and positive emotions strengthen our immune system. So these are now scientific facts, based on scientific findings and also our common experience and common sense. It is common sense that we should promote and pay more attention to the value of compassion and affection and a sense of care in the society through education. Then, I

think, once we create that kind of society, then every person whether a lawyer, a religious person, a politician, an engineer, a scientist, an educator, that person will come from a society that is more compassionate, and all the different professions will be humanized.

WINNIFRED SULLIVAN: So what is the role of religion in a democratic society that is based, as you say, on these basic human emotions and compassion that we learn from birth? What is the role for religion in such a society?

RICHARD WHITECROSS: Could I add on to that question? Should religion, whether Christian or Buddhist, be removed from the written constitution?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: We prefer secular. When our charter was adopted, one of my assertions in the charter was that we needed a secular basis. But then most of the concerned people rejected it. Religion is related to the individual, democracy is related to society. I now firmly believe that the institutions of religion and the institutions of secular society should be separate. Religion is an individual business. Also [I think] that the people who are working with the secular, personally it is better [if they are] religious minded.

WINNIFRED SULLIVAN: In the United States, one of the things that has happened to American Christianity and American religion generally, is that democracy has changed religion, so that the religion that is available to the individual is a kind of religion that is affected by democracy itself. So, religion also is very democratic and there is been a loss of hierarchy, you might say, in American religion. Do you see that as the problem for religion, that Tibetan Buddhism itself will become democratic as well as the society becoming democratic?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: As far as Buddhism is concerned, the Buddha I think did not mention how to manage society. The Buddhist monastic community has very democratic principles. There is an explicit statement

that the authority should not be rested in the single individual or person but rather in the community of monks. Monks rule monk's rights, monastic rights. Everything is discussed by groups of Bikshus, not a single Bikshu. There is no authority in the hands of one single Bikshu. Even the Dalai Lama although a temporal leader, both spiritual and temporal leader, has no power to change aspects of the Vinaya. For example, the ordination of a Bikshu, requires ten Bikshus or at least five Bikshus. So, it's through the meeting of five fully ordained monks that the authority is acquired to then give ordination to others. When a monastic rite is performed such as an ordination, one monk stands up and first informs the congregation such and such rite is being performed today, are you in agreement? And then later on, he reconfirms that there is an agreement for conducting this particular monastic rite. So, this suggests that there is a democratic principle underlying the monastic institutions.

This is the true origin of Buddhism. In the Tibetan case, unfortunately, certain institutions arose such as the lama institution, Tulku institution, reincarnated institution and they became rulers of particular areas. When a particular lama is corrupted, you see corrupted institutions. This should change. The main point is that, if you look at the original spirit behind the monastic institution established by the Buddha there does not seem be any conflict with democracy or democratic principles. Of course, other institutions that evolved later are a different story. But yes, corrupted [institutions] must change.

REBECCA FRENCH: What happens if the laws create economic circumstances that do not provide moral bases for persons? This is true in American society; we have a very difficult time because, as Winni put it, when democracy becomes what matters, religion is much less important. Institutions in capitalist countries have the ability to create consumer greed, to create fear with television, to create a whole series of things, and they are understood as democratic; this is a serious problem in the United States and it's not one which we know how to solve.

ELIZABETH MENSCH: In other words, a very secular constitution presupposes subjective value and pure

privatism. What happens to the notion of objective morality?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: Look at this is from the Buddhist point of view. The Buddha did not formulate the 253 monastic rules for a fully ordained monk all at one time. It was an organic process. Initially, a set of rules was established and as new circumstances revealed certain problems, then that situation was addressed, and another rule was added. So, organically, the lists of rules grew. And in some cases, rules were created, but later as a result of some other situation, it had to be rewritten with later, new additions. This organic process suggests that one has to be very realistic about the needs of the situation in the context and adapt the code according to this. Your constitution was adopted two hundred years ago. The economic situation at that time, the gap between rich and poor was much less and not a serious problem. Today, this gap has become not only a moral issue but also a problem of the society, either at the global level or national level. New realities are causing more problems, injustices. We have to look accordingly at the new reality and make some amendments. All of this depends on motivation. I think the capitalist system itself is not wrong or the social system. It depends on the individual. Individuals need sincere motivations, compassionate motivations, they need knowledge, a realistic outlook, and accordingly a realistic approach motivated by compassion. Socialism can be good, and capitalism, but I personally prefer socialism. Some Sri Lankan and Indian monks also have the same view, we should set up one Marxist political party among the monks.

JAMES MAGAVERN: I would like to return to the problem of dirty law. I am concerned that maybe I am a dirty lawyer. In our legal system, lawyers owe a very special responsibility to their clients, and although their responsibility can be tempered by compassion, even impartial compassion, we come to a point where if we are going to apply a principle of impartial compassion without regard to the legal rules in our legal role we would do one thing but, because of our obligation to the client, we must do something else. I can give you an example: the homicide defendant who is represented by a lawyer. The defendant

informs the lawyer that he had also murdered a young woman recently, who had just disappeared; the family did not know where the young woman was and was obviously distraught. And the lawyer felt that he could not properly inform the family or the authorities of this prior murder. This was a famous case in our state in which the court finally said that the lawyer was acting according to his ethically obligations to his client and therefore could not himself be prosecuted for crime. Now, in an imperfect world, we have all kinds of special responsibilities that are recognized by the social order, to the parent, to the child, perhaps your Holiness to the Tibetan people, and certainly the attorney to the client. We recognize these as both social norms and as legal rules - legal responsibilities - and if we are going to live according to those norms and rules, we are at times going to have to act at odds with more general fundamental principle of dispassionate universal impartial compassion. I am very interested in your insights into that problem. Do we need a set of secondary rules that mediate between the fundamental aspiration to impartial compassion on the one hand, and the rules of the imperfect society on the other hand? In the long run, will the cause of human dignity and welfare be served by participants acting in regard to special obligations to particular human beings, particular communities, particular institutions? And if we do that are we dirty lawyers?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: So, this is again from the Buddhist point of view and also in principle as to how it translates into actual practical applications. In principle, from the Buddhist point of view, one needs to be sensitive to the individual contexts so, sometimes you have contexts where the benefits to the individual has to be weighted against the wider implications for the actual society, the wider community. Also one has to take into account the damaging effects of a particular cause of action as opposed to the benefits the individual will reap. Or the benefits to the community have to be weighed against the damage to the individual. The main point is not to confine your evaluation purely to a single situation but rather look at its broader implications.

DAVID ENGEL: I would like to ask you a question about

the experience of ordinary people in a secular society where most of the people are Buddhist? Our experience in Thailand is that when an ordinary person feels that they have a dispute or when they feel that their rights have been violated, very often they think that it's better to be Buddhist and to accept the workings of karma and to forgive rather than to go to the courts of law. What is your perception of that? Is that a proper response for a Buddhist person living in the secular society or should they use the law in order to protect rights and promote the rule of law?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: Here also, I think, it depends on the actual circumstances. Now, firstly, this concerns self-discipline not only from a Buddhist basis, but even I think from a secular basis. If a dispute will create more problems, if the rights of others are not being respected, if it is not done out of compassion for others, then it is better not to do it, unless it is out of the principle of self-discipline and on the basis of compassion and respect for others. So, the ideal situation would be to exercise one's self-discipline and compassion and try to see if the problem can be resolved among the people themselves before going to the law court. With some quarrels at the family level or between neighbors, both sides should try to solve the issue between themselves according to the principles of reconciliation and self-discipline. If everyone acted that way, and then lawyers would become jobless !! The concept of karma depends very much upon one's individual understanding. If one's understanding of karma is quite good, then the concept of self-discipline will arise on the basis of respecting karma. However, sometimes people use karma as an excuse. When people use it as excuse for inaction, they say "this is my karma."

KENNETH EHRENBERG: Is there any way to use law to encourage people to develop this self-discipline? I mean Law is an external constraint and Buddhism seems to expect people to develop self-discipline as an internal development or internal practice. In an ideal legal system, is there some way to help or encourage the legal system, the external constraint or would that be not appropriate?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: Yes, certainly because

people will be more restrained in their behavior if they know what the legal consequences will be if they do certain things.

REBECCA FRENCH: I think one of the problems that we have in the United States is that law and, to a large extent, politics do not reinforce internal moral compassion and self-discipline. We see law as supporting economics and capitalist production. When the decision is between, "should we be moral" or "should we make money," the answer is almost always "make money." Americans are very worried about this now. They do not see their legal structure as promoting compassion, rehabilitation, justice or truth, the qualities that promote self-discipline and individualism. How do we do that?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: Economic motivation is very powerful and we cannot expect people not to be personally motivated by economic gain. Also without money, there is no progress. Even Buddhist monks who are aiming for Nirvana in their day-to-day life, need money. And I think from the Buddhist viewpoint, it really is a matter of balance. If we are striving for a perfect system, a perfect system can never exist. There will always be imperfections in the system. And with regard to monks needing money, in Buddhism there is a concept that we call the four factors of perfection. The Ultimate goal of nirvana is reached through dharma. The temporary goal of a happy life is reached through prosperity. So the causes of these two goals are dharma for nirvana and prosperity for a happy life. So, prosperity must be there. Capitalism is sort of a dynamic force for a better economy, the creation of better economies. But to just think only about money and forget other sorts of values, this is a mistake. So, individuals and human society need money and material facilities and at the same time they also need some internal values. In society, all of the many religions are related to a moral society. We can't say this one is the most important, and this other one is not important. I have always believed that every human activity, activities meant for humanity, meant for the world, should have as its ultimate motivation. a sense of responsibility, service and compassion.

Ultimately, compassion, serving others, helping others,

is in my own interest. I am part of this. That I think it is important. So compassion now, for example, my own for the future. Even with the life of a hermit, I am part of humanity. If all of humanity faces some serious problems, even a hermit will suffer so it makes sense to think of the well-being of others. If society is happy, I will be happy and get the maximum benefits. So to develop compassion is ultimately in the best interest of oneself.

FERNANDA PIRIE: Your Holiness, could I bring you back to one more practical question? A topic raised by George earlier on is the status of the reincarnate lamas particularly in eastern Tibet. They have great authority, they are respected, they have great ability to resolve disputes and even the government officials ask them often to solve particularly bad cases without fighting. Now you said lamas shouldn't have a role in party politics. What about their very useful role in these disputes? If they don't take on this role, won't this cause social upheaval by trying to change the present system?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: So long as this system works, go ahead. Those respected lamas are very useful for quarrels among their people. The lama's influence is much stronger than the Chinese officials which is good. But in principle, theoretical speaking, ultimately, I think that when a lama joins one of two political parties, it creates complications.

KENNETH SHOCKLEY: Your Holiness, I am interested in questions of toleration. How far can we extend this personal expression of toleration about the idea of toleration into the political realm? We may accept others as best we can and the motivations are what characterize right or wrong action, but I am wondering about how well we can tolerate selfish motivation in a political level. Surely at the personal level, we can accept all we can. But politically, how far should we tolerate when the motivations of others are not so selfless.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: There is a concept called misplaced toleration or misplaced forbearance. When

a politician is pursuing selfish ends and has a damaging effect on the whole community as a whole and people continue to tolerate that, that will be characterized as a misplaced tolerance or toleration. Compassion can be misplaced, and also forbearance. So, this shows us how complicated human society is.

KENNETH SHOCKLEY: This brings us to censorship. In a society that encourages right or wrong motivation in its legal system, what would be acceptable or allowed?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: I think censorship is wrong. I think people should be informed of the truth. I am always against censorship. I am skeptical whether censorship would ever really work. Censorship means something like "shut up. There is a great deal of criticism of censorship. With more discussion, more argument, and more investigation, the truth becomes clear and that is the way to defeat other sorts of wrong, to make clear the wrong motivation. Isn't it? It is one of the main aspects of democracy - freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and particularly freedom of media, I think a free media is very important. With censorship, the media is closed. This is the greatness of a democratic system. I am always telling media people that they should have a long nose to smell and make things public. If something goes wrong, they must tell or inform the public and write about it. Their motivations should be very objective, unbiased and sincere.

REBECCA FRENCH: The audience is filled with law professors, people who teach law, and care about law. And they would like to know: What do you think is the most important thing to teach in class?

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA: Oh, I don't know. In order to give you some kind of suggestions or advice, I should study law and make more money.

So, now time to go. THANK YOU!!

